

HB 926 -- TRAVEL HARDSHIPS

SPONSOR: Curtman

This bill changes the process by which travel hardships are granted to public school pupils.

The bill allows a parent or guardian of any pupil residing in any school district in the state to submit an application to the commissioner of education requesting that the pupil and any sibling of the pupil be assigned to another school district if the pupil is eligible and meets certain conditions.

This bill specifies that the driving distance from the pupil's residence to his or her attendance center in the district of residence must be 15 miles or more by the shortest route available. The new attendance center must be at least five miles closer in actual driving distance and the attendance of the student must not cause the classroom in the receiving district to exceed the number of students per class set by the receiving district.

The bill requires the commissioner to assign pupils in the order in which applications are received. Once granted, the hardship assignment will continue until the pupil, and any siblings of the pupil attending the same attendance center, completes his or her course of study in the receiving district or the parent withdraws the pupil. If withdrawn, subsequent grants of applications will be discretionary.

An eligible pupil is one of the following:

- (1) A pupil that has been enrolled in and attended a public school in his or her district of residence during the school year prior to the application;
- (2) A pupil that has been enrolled in and attended a public school in a district other than his or her district of residence and paid nonresident tuition for such enrollment during the school year prior to application; and
- (3) A resident pupil who becomes eligible for kindergarten or first grade.

A pupil who is not currently enrolled in a public school district will become eligible to apply after the student has enrolled in and completed a full school year in a public school in his or her district of residence. The board of education of the district in which the pupil resides will pay the tuition of the pupil reassigned, which must not exceed the pro rata cost of instruction.